The Last Lecture

The Last Lecture by Randy Pausch contained many anecdotes and reflections on life. Overall, I think it was a pleasant lecture filled with interesting tidbits from Dr. Pausch’s life. I like how he addressed his childhood dreams and showed where he either achieved them or learned something by not achieving them. My favorite quote from him was “experience is what you get when you didn’t get what you wanted.” I can relate to that one in terms of the experience being far more valuable to my character development than what the thing I wanted would have given me. Many of his reflections were interesting to consider, although most of them were not earth-shattering observations. At the end of his lecture, he mentioned his second head fake being that the lecture was designed for his children not for the audience. That made a lot of sense to me since his lecture was more of an autobiography than an inspirational talk. I can see how it would mean more to his family and friends than to strangers.

I did appreciate his upbeat and positive attitude throughout the lecture especially considering his life expectancy. It is honorable that he approached the topic of his life as more of a celebration than being morose about his diagnosis. The part that affected me the most was when he wished his wife a happy birthday. That choked me up a little bit, watching her cry over his surprise for her and knowing that it was probably the last birthday she spent with him. I am sure she was thinking the same thing when she went up and hugged him. It was touching. The thing I liked least about his lecture was when he was showing the virtual reality project that some of his students made. I found the entire project quite cringe-worthy and did not enjoy watching it in the least. That being said, his extensive accomplishments and the legacy he has left for future CS students is something to be admired. He achieved much career success in his short 47 years.